

8. God sent them special prophets, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea, who in every way, by words, by deeds, by visions, by object lessons, warned and entreated the people.

But in spite of all these things they refused to repent, they continued in evil ways, and at last they "ate the fruit of their own way, and were filled with their own devices." They "set at naught all Wisdom's counsel, and would none of her reproof," till their "fear came as desolation, and their destruction as a whirlwind."

#### The Way of Transgressors is Hard

Not only because of the awful punishment at the end, but because of the barriers God put in the way of sinners to keep them from walking in that way,—the love of God, the conscience and moral nature, the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, the sacrifices of Christ, the sense of honor, God's goodness, God's providence, early training, the influences of religion, prosperity.

1. *National Applications.* God has given wonderful possibilities to our nation, and we can make the Ideal to be Real if we will. Our only danger is in sin and irreligion,—in corruption, pride, luxury, oppression, selfishness, vice, neglect of duty. God is doing for the nations of today even more than for Israel, to keep them from the downward path. He gives prosperity and comforts. He lets hard times come, whose meaning is ever that we should note where we have gone wrong, and repent and do works meet for repentance.

2. *Personal Applications.* "The rise and fall" of Israel is a picture of what is going on continually among individuals. The whole course of the history is a magic mirror in which sinners may see themselves; a panorama of their own lives, the bright hopes and possibilities, the loving care of God, the numberless good gifts, the varied trainings by joys and sorrows, the sins against God's goodness, the troubles that result, the warnings and entreaties by pastors and teachers, the Word of God; and in some cases the persistence in evil till the irrevocable ruin at the end. It is well for each one to look and see to what part of his life history he has arrived, and whither he is tending, and where he will end if he does not repent and turn unto the Lord.

#### Guiding Questions

The following 25 questions are meant to bring out the important lessons and truths of the quarter's study:

1. In what sense was the division of the kingdom of Israel from the Lord?
2. What two very common mistakes did king Rehoboam make at this time?
3. What great prophet of the Lord was sent to warn the people and instruct them?
4. In what two ways was his faith severely tried and what was the result?
5. What promise of Christ was fulfilled in the experience of the widow of Zarephath?
6. What great test took place on Mt. Carmel and with what result?

7. In what way does Christianity show its superiority over all other religions?

8. On what grounds can you justify the slaying of 450 prophets of Baal?

9. Did Elijah's faith and courage fail him when he took his flight into the wilderness?

10. In what way did the Lord come to him and encourage him before he reproved him?

11. Should we thus help others in bodily things if we would do them good spiritually?

12. Is there more good in the country, the church, and the world than many see?

13. Did Ahab sin in desiring to have possession of Naboth's vineyard?

14. Will any amount of possessions keep us from being discontented and covetous?

15. How many of the ten commandments were broken in obtaining possession of the vineyard?

16. What does Elisha's choice show as to his piety and devotion to his work?

17. Can we all be as faithful as Elisha was and reap the reward?

18. What three precious lessons do we learn from the Shunammite woman?

19. What three mistakes did Naaman make in seeking to be healed of his leprosy?

20. Do some people now seek salvation where it is not to be found and in the wrong way?

21. Is it always our duty and is it always wise to treat our enemies kindly?

22. What lessons concerning faith and unbelief do we learn from the death of Elisha?

23. Does continuance in sin always bring ruin to nations and individuals?

24. What was the cause of the captivity of the ten tribes and what does it teach?

25. What lesson teaches: 1. The value of good counsel. 2. The results of discouragements. 3. God's love to the erring. 4. How God cares for us. 5. That there is but one true God. 6. The folly of idolatry. 7. The awful sin of covetousness. 8. Consecration, faith and devotion. 9. Existence after death. 10. Obedience as the condition of salvation. 11. That righteous men are of more value to a nation than armies. 12. That sin always ends in ruin.

## Our Bible School

### NAHUM

R. R. TEETER

The mission of Nahum is signified in his name which means consolation and vengeance.

Of his parentage we know nothing; his social standing we are unable to determine; the place of his birth is located with difficulty and uncertainty. Elkosh or Elkesi, a village of Galilee, was pointed out to Jerome as a place of note among the Jews. The name Capernaum, i. e., "village of Nahum," seems to take its name from Nahum having resided there, tho born in Elkosh. East of the Tigris there is an Elkosh believed by Jewish pilgrims to be the birthplace and burial place

of the prophet. But Nahum's writing in its allusions shows a more particular acquaintance with Palestine and a general knowledge of Nineveh. Of Nahum's early training and education we are able to judge only by his writing, as to his age when he began his work we have nothing upon which to base an opinion, while the time in which he lived is only determined by the character of his prophecy, which would place it between 720 and 710 B. C. This places his work in the reign of Hezekiah (who began to reign in Judah in 726) after Israel had been carried away captive, and while the great Assyrian power was yet unbroken. The correspondence between the sentiments of Nahum and those of Isaiah and Hezekiah as recorded in II Kings and Isaiah proves the likelihood of Nahum's prophecies belonging to the time when Sennacherib was demanding the surrender of Jerusalem.

The prophecy is remarkable for its unity of aim. It is intended to inspire his own countrymen with hope and courage.

Tho to the ordinary eye the outlook was anything but encouraging, yet to Nahum there was cause for consolation if not of rejoicing.

With the great enemy of Judah before him seemingly to devour Jerusalem as other cities and strong nations had been devoured, yet with his knowledge of God's jealousy and vengeance he seems entirely unabashed in the face of the great danger. His language in speaking of God indicates that he was familiar with the character of God, and thus indicates the probability of his having been educated in one of the prophetic schools, where, in his heart had taken deep root, the majesty and holiness of God, and where he came so close to God that God's own future dealing with the nations of the earth was revealed to him.

If Nahum's work was during the reign of Hezekiah, after the establishment of the temple worship, and while the people seemed anxious to worship as the fathers of old had worshiped, it required no special courage on his part to preach the keeping of the Feasts at Jerusalem.

But, as oftentimes service fails from the want of encouragement, it is perhaps as great or a greater task to keep the work in a healthful condition as it is to start it. This being true, the importance of Nahum's preaching is increased, as the only hope of Judah was to continue in the service of Jehovah and in their time of affliction to remember that, in God's time, justice and judgment shall overtake the wicked, and all the pomp and splendor and might of earthly kingdoms can not prevent it, even as Nineveh with all her glory would be trampled into dust.

The clear, elegant and forcible style of Nahum's writing makes it more easy to grasp the thought, and his power of representing different phases of an idea in the briefest sentences and the variety of his manner in expressing ideas show his poetic talent.

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